

# **TOWN OF LUNENBURG MASSACHUSETTS OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER**



**Heather R. Lemieux**

*Town Manager*

## **COVID-19 Response Update**

**March 13, 2020**

The Town of Lunenburg, in an effort to provide on-going information regarding the coronavirus situation, will be posting regular updates for the community. The updates will also reinforce the public health message that is so important to help keep us safe. Information regarding this situation is evolving so check back regularly for the updates.

At this point there are zero (0) presumptive positive or zero (0) confirmed cases of COVID-19 in our community.

If you are determined to have a presumptive positive (confirmed) case of COVID-19 you will receive a call from the Nashoba Associated Boards of Health Public Health Nurse to discuss the steps you need to take to help resolve your illness and protect yourself and your community.

If you are considered a close contact (someone who has been with in 6' off a presumptive positive case for more than 15 minutes) to a presumptive positive (or confirmed) case you will receive a call from a Public Health Nurse to discuss the steps you need to take to help keep the community safe.

The Fire Department is asking the public to inform dispatchers when they call to request an ambulance if they suspect they have flu like symptoms associated with COVID-19, have come into contact with someone who has the virus or have traveled to an affect area. Those able to safely travel to a nearby hospital if they need medical assistance are asked to call ahead to notify the hospital that you think you may have COVID-19.

The Police Department would like to remind residents to be vigilant of potential scams and cyber scams/viruses around COVID-19, like requesting donations or selling products claiming to cure, prevent or detect the virus. The department is not aware of any scams currently happening in town but would like residents to remain vigilant.

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The COVID-19 situation is very fluid and new information and guidelines are being posted by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) on a regular basis. The links for both DPH and CDC are provided below.

<https://www.mass.gov/resource/information-on-the-outbreak-of-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/index.html>

Mass211, a partner with MEMA, is another resource for residents to call with public health questions related to the coronavirus (dial 211). For more on-line information go to [mass211.org](https://mass211.org).

Listed below is information from the CDC fact sheet regarding COVID-19

### ***How does COVID-19 spread?***

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but is now spreading from person to person. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses.

### ***What are the symptoms of COVID-19?***

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of • fever • cough • shortness of breath.

### ***How can I help protect myself?***

People can help protect themselves from respiratory illness with everyday preventive actions.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available. If you are sick, to keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

As additional information public health information becomes available we will update this information.

## **Update on Town Facilities and Lunenburg Public Schools**

Given the evolving conditions related to the spread of the Coronavirus, its inherent risk to the public, and to act in abundance of caution for the community and our staff, the Town of Lunenburg is closing all town buildings

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to the public, excluding the public safety building, effective today. This decision will remain in force and effect for 2 weeks (through Friday, March 27), at which time this access restriction may be adjusted or discontinued.

The affected town buildings, though closed to public access, will be staffed during normal working hours and can be reached by phone or on-line. The Senior Center will continue providing transportation services and the Meals on Wheels program in an effort to continue these essential services to the senior population. The continuation of services to our residents is a priority, however this will require for this to be done remotely. If the staffing situation changes, we will provide an update to the public.

Effective Monday, March 16, the Lunenburg Public Schools will be closed for a period of two weeks (through Friday, March 27). All classes, as well as extracurricular activities, clubs, and sports, will be suspended. All school buildings will be closed with the exception of custodians who will be working to do a deep sanitizing of the facilities.

In regards to public meetings for boards and committees, we are putting a plan in place to utilize the Open Meeting Law Order signed by Governor Baker that allows for remote participation by all members of a public body and alternative means of public access to these meetings. Once that plan is in place, we will notify the public how they will be able to participate remotely. All other public events, including Town Caucus, will not take place during the next 2 weeks and this time period may be adjusted at the end of the 2 week closure. As of today, Town Caucus has been rescheduled to Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup>.

This decision is being made to protect our public safety officials, the health and safety of the community, our vulnerable populations, our staff, and slow the transmission of the virus within the community. As this situation has rapidly evolved and is highly fluid, we will continue to provide updates to the public through the town website, the town Facebook page, the townwide email listserv, and the Lunenburg Ledger.

Please continue to follow the preventative protocols issued through the Department of Public Health and the CDC guidelines and we will continue to post updates with any new information.

Sincerely,

*Heather R. Lemieux*

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Town Manager